



Glastonbury Board of Education

628 Hebron Avenue-Building Two

P.O. Box 191

Glastonbury, CT 06033

Tel: (860) 652-7951 ♦ Fax: (860) 652-7982

www.glastonburyus.org

April 2, 2015

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A MINIMUM LEVEL OF FUNDING UNDER THE EDUCATION COST SHARING GRANT FORMULA.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

That section 10-262h of the general statutes be amended to require that no town shall receive less than fifty per cent of the education cost sharing grant adjusted fully funded formula.

Statement of Purpose:

To ensure more equitable ECS funding to towns that have experienced growing poverty since the ECS cap was established.

Good morning. My name is Susan Karp and I am the Chairman of the BOE in Glastonbury. As I have the privilege of addressing the Appropriations Committee, it is with full knowledge of the difficult funding decisions that must be made at the state and local level as well as the shared commitment to provide the best education for all students in Connecticut. I am here to ask for your support of Senate Bill 816. You have heard repeatedly that meeting the state's obligation to fund education must be a priority and I hear from my residents every year that the burden of funding local education is growing while our state funding remains the same.

While I am not an expert on the ECS formula, when it was developed, it was the understanding across the State of Connecticut that this formula would be used each year to determine the support that towns would receive. With changes in the number of students getting free and reduced lunches a major factor in the formula, we have seen changes in the needs of towns but not in the funding for these towns. A series of decisions has led to a funding approach that disproportionally burdens some of Connecticut's school districts more than other. We understand that ECS is not fully funded. We don't like it, but we understand it. Funding is indeed limited. However, there are now 19 towns below 50% target funding. This is simply not right. All students need additional funding and additional support in our schools. Yet, the state funding is not there, and the towns cannot keep raising taxes to provide additional services for these students. It is more difficult every year as BOE members work tirelessly to provide appropriate technology, curriculum development, professional development and funding to meet the new testing obligations. We do not want to impact the education of our students at any level. It doesn't matter if you are in a suburban or urban town. The needs in all towns are great and growing. It's time for the State Legislature to do the fair thing and adjust the educational cost sharing grant to accurately reflect the needs in each community and most importantly help to best prepare our students for their future. This bill is an important step in the right direction and I encourage your support. My sincere thanks for your consideration and all that you do.